**Civil Rights and Resisting Arrest**

The arrest of a New York City police officer, who was [accused of violating the civil rights of an African-American man](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/18/nyregion/officer-accused-of-civil-rights-violation-in-false-arrest.html) during a stop-and-frisk arrest, provides good reason for Justice Department officials and state lawmakers to investigate whether others on the force are engaging in similar practices.

Federal prosecutors on Monday charged the officer, Michael Daragjati, with violating the man’s constitutional rights by falsely accusing him of resisting arrest. The criminal complaint suggests how easily that charge can be abused. Nearly 6,000 New Yorkers were taken into custody last year with resisting arrest as the most serious charge against them, the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services has reported.

According to the complaint filed in Federal District Court in Brooklyn, text messages and calls by Officer Daragjati, which were intercepted in a wiretap in an investigation for other crimes, showed him fabricating facts and bragging to a friend that he had “fried another nigger” and that it was “no big deal.”

The African-American man was walking in a residential area of Staten Island when he was stopped, shoved against the side of a parked van and searched by Officer Daragjati, who is white. The officer found no drugs or weapons, but grew angry when the man complained about his treatment and asked for the officer’s name and badge number. Prosecutors say that Officer Daragjati arrested the man, who put up no struggle, and falsified a police report, charging the man with resisting arrest, a misdemeanor.

**Pressed, Sheriff Agrees to Jails Inquiry**

LOS ANGELES — Accusations of inmate abuse in the country’s largest jail system have piled up over the last several days and weeks, with tales of volunteers witnessing beatings of prisoners. And when news broke of a federal investigation into the conduct of several guards, the Los Angeles County sheriff, Lee Baca, reacted angrily, saying the inquiry overstepped its authority.

But this week, facing mounting political pressure, Sheriff Baca announced a number of new investigations and changes in the county jails, saying he would appoint a special task force to examine dozens of allegations that the American Civil Liberties Union included in a [federal court filing](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/28/us/aclu-suit-details-wide-abuse-in-los-angeles-jail-system.html) last month.

Although he defended his leadership, Sheriff Baca said in an interview that he intends to focus on ways to improve communication between inmates and his deputies in the county facilities, particularly in Men’s Central jail, which has been the focus of most of the complaints.

“We need to be focusing on the issue of respect for the inmates; the escalation of violence all stems from that,” Sheriff Baca said on Monday. “The escalation of the emotion is what leads to violence, but we’re the ones that should be more sensible about it. When the day is done, we are the inmates’ caretakers.”

**In Arizona, Complaints That an Accent Can Hinder a Teacher’s Career**

PHOENIX — When Guadalupe V. Aguayo puts her hand to her heart, faces the American flag in the corner of her classroom and leads her second-graders in the Pledge of Allegiance, she says some of the words — like allegiance, republic and indivisible — with a noticeable accent.

When she tells her mostly Latino students to finish their breakfasts, quiet down, pull out their homework or capitalize the first letter in a sentence, the same accent can be heard.

Ms. Aguayo is a veteran teacher in the Creighton Elementary School District in central Phoenix as well an immigrant from northern Mexico who learned English as an adult and taught it as a second language. Confronted about her accent by her school principal several years ago, Ms. Aguayo took a college acting class, saw a speech pathologist and consulted with an accent reduction specialist, none of which transformed her speech.

As Ms. Aguayo has struggled, though, something else has changed. Arizona, after almost a decade of sending monitors to classrooms across the state to check on teachers’ articulation, recently made a sharp about-face on the issue. A federal investigation of possible civil rights violations prompted the state to call off its accent police.

“To my knowledge, we have not seen policies like this in other states,” Russlynn H. Ali, the assistant federal secretary of education for civil rights, said in an interview.

**High Court To Hear Case About V.M.I.**

Setting the stage for one of its most important sex discrimination rulings in years, the Supreme Court agreed today to decide whether Virginia's exclusion of women from its state-supported military college violated the Constitution and, if so, whether setting up a separate women's military program at a nearby women's college was a sufficient remedy.

The Court's decision on the future of the 156-year-old Virginia Military Institute will also determine the fate of the country's only other state-supported all-male military college, The Citadel, in Charleston, S.C..

Both institutions asked the Justices to review decisions by the same court, the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, in Richmond, which ruled in separate cases that excluding women from the opportunity for a state-supported military education violated the 14th Amendment's guarantee of equal protection of the laws.

In the V.M.I. case, the Fourth Circuit then accepted Virginia's plan to offer a military-style but much different program at Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Va., 35 miles north of its campus in Lexington.

The Clinton Administration appealed that ruling, telling the Justices that the appeals court had made the original constitutional violation even worse by endorsing an alternative that did not even meet the "separate-but-equal" standard the Supreme Court rejected in its landmark racial integration cases.

Expanded Immigration Detention: Locking Up Those Yearning to Breathe Free

Imagine coming to the United States fleeing persecution, applying for asylum and being immediately locked up. Your introduction to dreamed-about American freedoms takes place in an immigration detention facility with little chance of ever coming before an immigration judge to determine if your detention is even necessary.

That's what happened to Lobsang Norbu, a Buddhist monk from Tibet, who [came to the United States](http://www.immigrationforum.org/images/uploads/2011/Indefinite%20Detention%20Summary.pdf) after fleeing China where he was persecuted for his religious beliefs and political expression. While in China, Norbu was arrested, incarcerated and tortured.

After arriving in New York, Norbu was locked up in an immigration detention center while he waited for a decision on his asylum claim. Despite posing no flight risk or danger to society, he was detained for 10 months without a bond hearing to determine if his detention was necessary -- all at a cost of between $37,000 and $50,000. Norbu was later granted asylum and currently lives in a Tibetan group home on Long Island, New York where he works at a restaurant.

[Leaving Women Out in the Cold](http://www.aclu.org/blog/womens-rights/leaving-women-out-cold)

This week, the ACLU called on Baltimore City to stop leaving women out in the cold. Literally. When the city’s only emergency homeless shelter is full, it provides “overflow” shelter beds to men — [and not women](http://www.baltimoresun.com/news/maryland/baltimore-city/bs-md-ci-homeless-discrimination-20111025,0,7447872.story). Turned away, single women seeking shelter have been left to fend for themselves, sleeping in parking lots and backyards, where they face exposure to the elements and have fallen victim to physical and sexual assaults.

The city created this problem last summer, when it downsized its only 24-hour emergency shelter for single adults, reducing the number of beds from 350 to 250. When advocates for the homeless raised concerns about the dramatic reduction in beds, city officials assured everyone that it would not transition from the old shelter to the new shelter until a plan for additional overflow beds was in place.

But inexplicably, the city set up a plan for overflow beds for men only. When the 175 beds for men at the new shelter fill up, any additional men seeking shelter are bussed in to a100-bed overflow shelter. When women turn up seeking shelter after the 75 beds for women at the Center fill up — usually, by around 2 pm, they are simply turned away to sleep in the streets.

But the injustice does not end there. Outrageously, when women sought legal counsel to challenge the city’s discrimination, they were told by staff members at the shelter that they will lose their beds and will be “blacklisted for life” if they speak with lawyers. Apparently, the city expects women to blindly submit to second-class citizenship.